

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Diet and Nutrition in Relation to Health

Unit code: DJ1P 34

Unit purpose: This unit provides workers in social and health care settings with knowledge of a balanced diet and the skills to advise and support individuals in relation to healthy diet choices as well as the effects of dietary choices on health.

On completion of this unit the candidate will be able to:

- ◆ Explain the contribution of diet and nutrition in relation to health.
- ◆ Support individuals by promoting healthy diet and nutrition

Credit points and level: 0.5 HN Credit at SCQF level 7: (4 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: It would be beneficial if candidates have an understanding of basic human physiology.

Core skills: There may be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components.

Candidates will have opportunities to develop the following core skills:

Communication: will be evidenced and developed by candidates through a range of activities and assessment (written) as well as class and small group/plenary discussions (oral).

Problem Solving: will be developed as candidates identify and evaluate a range of diet and nutrition choices available and their effects on an individual or client group.

Working with Others: will be developed as certain activities may require candidates to collaborate with each other as well as colleagues in the work placement experience.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes.

This unit is part of the group award HNC Social Care and HNC Health Care. However, it may also be used as a 'stand alone' Unit and could be useful as part of a continuing professional development programme (CPD).

General information for centres (cont)

Assessment: It is recommended that assessment for this unit be integrated for all outcomes. Assessment could take the form of a case study. The candidate would analyse nutritional/dietary needs for a particular individual or group. This should include evidence of relevant social and environmental factors affecting diet and nutrition. Candidates should demonstrate their ability to contribute to appropriate support in relation to dietary choices of individuals and how these choices impact on the health of the individual or group.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Explain the contribution of diet and nutrition in relation to health

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ The function of a balanced diet
- ◆ Current theories and government guidelines in relation to diet and nutrition
- ◆ Digestion and absorption of nutrients
- ◆ Effects of an imbalanced diet on health

Evidence requirements

Written evidence in the form of the first part of the case study based on an individual or group that the candidate is working with. Candidates should:

- ◆ Explain the function of a balanced diet in relation to the main food groups
- ◆ Explain the contribution of a balanced diet to health in relation to current, relevant nutritional theories and government guidance
- ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of digestion and absorption of nutrients
- ◆ Demonstrate an understanding of how health can be affected by an imbalanced diet

Assessment guidelines

This will form the first part of the case study.

Outcome 2

Support individuals by promoting healthy diet and nutrition

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ Social and economic factors that affect healthy diet and nutrition
- ◆ Environmental factors that affect healthy diet and nutrition
- ◆ Support individuals by promoting healthy diet and nutrition

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Diet and Nutrition in Relation to Health

Evidence requirements

This assessment should form the second part of the case study. Candidates should:

- ◆ Demonstrate an awareness of social, economic and environmental factors that can affect the health of individuals
- ◆ Demonstrate the promotion of healthy diet and nutrition.

Assessment guidelines

This will form the second part of the case study and should move the candidates on from discussing government initiatives, which promote healthy diet, to practical application.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DJ1P 34
Unit title:	Diet and Nutrition in Relation to Health
Superclass category:	PA
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Diet and Nutrition in Relation to Health

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 20 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This unit is primarily intended to help candidates working in a health or social care setting to contribute to their clients' care by providing information on dietary choices in line with current research and guidelines.

Outcome 1

Function of a balanced diet

A balanced diet acts to provide appropriate types and adequate amounts of food and drink to supply nutrition and energy for maintenance of body cells, tissues and organs and to support normal growth and development. The following sources should be included:

- ◆ Bread and cereals, including rice and potatoes. (Complex carbohydrates)
- ◆ Meat, fish, poultry and alternatives. (Proteins)
- ◆ Milk and dairy products.
- ◆ Fats and sugars.
- ◆ Fruit and vegetables.

Current theories and government guidelines in relation to diet and nutrition

Current government guidelines should be explored, for example, to reduce the intake of fats, sugars and salt, to increase dietary fibre such as fruit and vegetables as well as the use of wholegrain products.

Current theories should include the link between diet and health in relation to health problems for example: heart and circulatory disease, hypertension, obesity, diabetes, dental caries, digestive tract disorders.

Guidelines taken from:

- ◆ Committee on Medical Aspects of Food and Nutrition Policy
- ◆ Improving Health in Scotland: The Challenge (2003)
- ◆ Eating for Health: A Diet Action Plan for Scotland (1996)

Digestion and absorption of nutrients

Candidates should have fundamental information about digestion and absorption of nutrients as well as associated organs, for example, the brain, liver, gall bladder and pancreas. There should be an appreciation that if there is damage or disease this could affect absorption and consequently health. Examples could include: anaemia, coeliac disease, diabetes etc.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Diet and Nutrition in Relation to Health

Effects of an imbalanced diet on health

Some of the affects of an imbalance in diet and nutrition are listed below.

- ◆ Increased fat intake -incidence of coronary heart disease and obesity
- ◆ Increased salt intake -incidence of hypertension, renal disease and heart disease
- ◆ Increased sugar intake -incidence of dental disease
- ◆ Low fibre intake -incidence of bowel disorders including bowel cancer
- ◆ Obesity – incidence of diabetes, joint problems, heart disease and hypertension

Outcome 2

Social and economic factors that affect healthy diet and nutrition

Family history – the type of diet people have been exposed to as children, how was the food prepared for example will have an effect on the choices individuals make in relation to their diet.

Culture will also have an impact, including the 24-hour availability of fast foods.

Families on low incomes may buy foods, which are cheaper and have lower nutritional value because of financial restrictions. Research suggests families with higher incomes tend to have more balanced diets, as they do not have the same financial restrictions placed upon them.

Environmental factors that affect healthy diet and nutrition

Availability of food, for example is there a wide variety of food on offer locally at affordable prices.

Transport - for example do they have access to a large supermarket or do they rely on smaller local shops as they perhaps do not have their own transport or there may be a lack of reliable public transport.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This unit is one of the optional units in the Group Award – HNC in Social Care and also HNC in Health Care. It can also be delivered as part of the Group Award or as a ‘stand alone’ Unit.

Open learning

For information on open learning arrangements, please refer to the SQA guide *Assessment and Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning* (SQA, 2000).

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

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Candidates with additional support needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Additional Support Needs* (BA 2399, SQA, due 2004).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Diet and Nutrition in Relation to Health

In undertaking this unit you will learn about what constitutes a balanced diet and how diet and nutrition can affect the health of the individual. It will also give you knowledge of factors, which affect dietary choices including social and environmental factors and how to support and advise individuals to make healthy choices in relation to their diet, using current guidelines.

You will be assessed by means of a case study relating to an individual or individuals with specific health related issues. You must demonstrate an understanding of the effects of dietary choices on health and be able to identify and advise on healthy food choices for the individual or group you are working with.